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PRAGUE FOR LEGATT JOYCE

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [KCRM](#) [PHUM](#) [KPAO](#) [PINR](#) [LO](#)
SUBJECT: SLOVAK POLICE WORRIED ABOUT NEW INTERIOR
MINISTER'S TIES TO CORRUPT POLITICIANS

REF: BRATISLAVA 100

Classified By: DCM Lawrence R. Silverman for Reasons 1.4 (B) and (D).

¶1. (S) Poloff spent February 23 participating in weapons training at the invitation of Pavol Draxler (protect), the Ministry of the Interior's National Coordinator for the Fight Against Trafficking in Persons. Draxler, an up-and-coming policy-maker at the Ministry of the Interior (MOI), spent the day speaking freely about the Ministry, the police force, and the Ministry's disdain for the political party of until-recently Interior Minister Vladimir Palko, the Christian Democrat Party (KDH). Despite KDH's a "law and order" reputation, Palko failed to implement any significant changes, according to Draxler.

KDH'S HANDS-OFF MANAGEMENT STYLE

¶2. (S) Draxler told us that former Minister Palko spoke with only five or six advisors, and that Draxler himself -- who was considered by many to be "close" to the Minister -- only saw him once or twice a year. Palko's contact with Ministry employees besides this inner circle was so filtered that he, and by extension his KDH agenda, was ineffective; Palko's public spats with the Police Presidium over wages only aggravated the problem. Draxler joked that compared with the Ministry's prior leadership (under Vladimir Meciar's HZDS), he wasn't sure what was worse: a party that had the ability to lead and make change but wasn't interested (HZDS), or a party that claimed to be interested in "law and order" but wasn't able to lead (KDH).

DOES PADO HAVE TIES TO CORRUPT POLITICIANS?

¶3. (S) Draxler also said that Ministry personnel -- both civilian and police -- were concerned by the recent elevation of State Secretary Martin Pado to Minister (reftel), because his inner circle includes several people who are "too close for comfort" to SDKU MP Roman Vavrik, considered by many to be a "slimy" politician and, in the words of Draxler, "the number one white collar criminal in Slovakia." Draxler said that many in the MOI now fear that anything sent up to Pado's office will inadvertently end up in the hands of Vavrik, which may confound anti-corruption investigations and efforts.

CONCERN ABOUT THE GENERAL PROSECUTOR, TOO

¶4. (S) Slovakia's General Prosecutor -- a position that operates in complete independence from the Ministry of Justice and the judiciary -- did not escape Draxler's concern, either. Draxler noted that the General Prosecutor has recently ordered the cessation of several prosecutions, including those of several skinhead leaders arrested last

year. The GP has done so without explanation, and under current Slovak law, he is not required to give one. Draxler asked the Embassy to use its good offices to inquire with the GP as to the reason for these decisions. (COMMENT: Draxler's comments do not fall on deaf ears. The structure of the General Prosecutor's office is extremely hierarchical, and we are working to bring the General Prosecutor and his senior staff to the United States on an IV program this fall in an effort to educate him about the roles and responsibilities of U.S. prosecutors. END COMMENT)

MOI NO LONGER A PLUM POST

15. (S) Looking ahead to Slovakia's June 17 national elections, Draxler said that he and his colleagues are unsure as to who will emerge as the next Minister. He said that Smer MP Robert Kalinak had looked like he was being groomed for the job for a while, but that Kalinak saw how hard it was to run the MOI and shifted his focus to MOD instead, as the MOD has "more toys and fewer issues." All in all, though, Draxler said that people like him think MOI is a good Ministry to work for, since one does not have to wear their politics on their sleeve there, as they have to elsewhere "like at the Ministry of Education."
VALLEE